

'Fighting Cap's' Baptism At 'Devil Anse's' Bier Ends Feud of Brothers

Vow to Shed No More Human Blood Brings
Reconciliation Between Noted Feudists'
Two Sons, Estranged Many Years.

By Marguerite Moores Marshall.

He died without his boots on, after a long illness, the Hatfield-McCoy feud of thirty years ago, would end his life in bed at eighty-six, after an attack of pneumonia, quite as if he were a Montclair commuter or a New York housewife. Yet word of his demise has come to the ears of the most adventurous of American careers has just come to the outside world from the old Hatfield-McCoy feud.



"DEVIL ANSE" HATFIELD.

field home at Island Creek, Logan County, W. Va.

But almost equally unbelievable was the reconciliation of the feudists' two sons, one of the many dramatic incidents which characterized "Devil Anse's" burial in the blood-stained mountains near Main Island Creek, W. Va., yesterday.

Before the march to the cemetery began the hands of two of the dead man's sons, long estranged brothers, were clasped over the coffin. These were "Cap" Hatfield, the father's namesake and head lieutenant, and Dr. E. H. Hatfield of Charleston. The reconciliation was attended by a general demonstration of sorrow among those at the funeral.

As the procession moved the restoration of good will between the brothers formed the chief subject of discussion, and at the grave before the body was lowered "Cap" Hatfield addressed "Uncle Dyke" Garrett, an old preacher and friend of the family, and told him that he had "made his peace with God and was ready to be baptized" whenever the minister would say the word.

"I will baptize you, boy," responded the old clergyman, "in the very spot where I baptized your pappy." To this "Cap" Hatfield dramatically raised his hands above his head in the attitude of one solemnly vowing and declared that he was done with fighting; that in his heart there no longer rankled malice and that if any man sought his life blood he would not resist.

The Hatfield-McCoy feud, bloody and lawless as any Sicilian mafia, began in the mountains of West Virginia and Kentucky forty years ago, in 1880, Randolph McCoy, commonly known as "Old Rand," leader of the McCoy faction, lived with his kinsfolk and retainers on Pond Creek in Pike County, Ky. "Devil Anse" Hatfield and his clan were on the Logan County side of the Tug River in West Virginia.

The McCoy boys charged that the Hatfield clan "took up" two hogs that belonged to some of the McCoy's. The Hatfields asserted that, on the contrary, "Old Rand" McCoy "took up" two hogs that were the property of "Anse" Hatfield.

There was a justice court trial over the hogs, and the Hatfields won the case for the simple reason that they had more witnesses who swore under oath to some things, than the McCoy boys were able to muster.

A few months later two of the McCoy boys laid Bill Statton, a member of the Hatfield clan, and murdered him from ambush. They were arrested and tried and were acquitted for lack of evidence.

As "Devil Anse" remarked at the time, "When the McCoy boys let clean off 'bout so much as sinners."

the gallies, the Hatfields got their dead up for sure.

He took charge of matters himself. But first came the "dare" Ellison Hatfield issued to Talbert McCoy to fight him. The two met, Hatfield got the better of McCoy, who suddenly drew a knife and plunged it several times into Hatfield's body. Hatfield, with superhuman strength, for his body was bleeding from several deep gashes, threw McCoy to the ground and grasping a big rock, raised it to crush McCoy's skull. Then, it is alleged, another McCoy shot Hatfield from ambush.

Three McCoy boys were arrested, while Hatfield was carried to the home of a member of the clan. It was decided to move the prisoners to Pikeville, the county town. On the way there a party of Hatfields overtook and captured them. They were carried back into the hills and placed under Hatfield guard. "Devil Anse" took charge of the party and conveyed the prisoners over the river to West Virginia.

Mrs. Sarah McCoy, mother of the boys, came to plead for them. But women received little consideration in a mountain feud. The message to her

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was brief. "If Ellison dies, I will have got to die." He died that very day, and the young McCoy was sentenced to death by "Devil Anse" and his hand.

They were brought back into Pike County, Ky., where Ellison Hatfield received his death wound. They were tied to trees and shot to death, many bullets entering each body. Twenty-three Hatfields were indicted for the murders, but they had returned to West Virginia and formally organized, apparently for defense and offense, with "Devil Anse" and his son "Cap" as their leaders.

The feud went on as it had begun, with brutal murders every year or so, most of them committed from amb-

bush. Whenever it died down a bit, the McCoy clan tried to enlist the law on their side, a procedure which kindled afresh the rage of the Hatfields. One of the most horrible attacks in the mountain warfare was that led by "Cap" Hatfield, son of "Devil Anse," against the house of "Old Rand" McCoy and his men, surrounded the cabin one night, when it was filled with the women and children of their enemies. "Cap" McCoy did not respond to the loud invitation of his enemies to come out. They battered the door down. They ordered "Rand's" eighteen-year-old daughter, Allaphare McCoy, to make a light. She said she couldn't and begged them not to kill her. But Ellison Mounts, one of the band, shot her through the heart. The cabin was burned to the ground. Ellison finally was hanged for that killing, after an attempt to smuggle poison to him by members of his clan failed. This execution put somewhat of a quietus on the indiscriminate feud killings, which are variously estimated as from fifty to 100.

"Devil Anse" got religion in 1911, and two years later he even went on the fandeville stage. At that time he publicly admitted that the feud was over. Of his thirteen sons only two were killed, and he himself always declared that he had nothing for which to apologize, since he merely protected his own.

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